reported by NABARD, during the last three years is indicated below:

1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
1165	581	NIL

NABARD have further reported that information in respect of Andhra Pradesh for the above three years is nil. The State-wise information in respect of the remaining States is being collected by NABARD.

News Item Regarding Illegal Tax Collection

1720. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned 'Illegal tax collection is nothing short of a scandal: Chelliah' appearing in the Times of India dated November 16, 1996;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) the details of the action taken against the officials involved; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken by Government to improve tax administration?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Taxes are collected under the provisions of Taxing statutes. In case the views of the tax collecting agencies are not upheld, that does not make the collection illegal in itself warranting action against the officials.

(d) Improvement and modernisation of tax administration is an on going process. It is taken up on top priority basis.

Prevalence of Hepatitis-B in Country

1721. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA:
DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the virus Hepatitis-B is playing havoc in the country;

(b) if so, what is the prevalence and incidence of Hepatitis-B in our country; and

(c) what steps are being taken to control Hepatitis-B?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) and (b) Available data indicate that about 3–5% of the population are having chronic hepatitis-B infection.

(c) An Expert Committee has given certain recommendations in regard to the introduction of Hepatitis-B under the immunization programme. It has been decided to immunize the hospital workers of central Government Hospitals in the first instance. In addition screening of donated blood for Hepatitis 'B', Promotion of safe sex behaviour and use of disposable syringes etc. are also undertaken.

World Bank Assistance for Family Planning to Gujarat

1722. SHRIMATI ANANDIBEN JETHABHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any World Bank assistance requested by the Government of Gujarat for the Family Planning Programme during the year 1995-96;

(b) if so, the details of the assistance provided to the state so far;